

## The Dawn of the Era of Power From Oil

Crude Product Now Rivaling Coal for Many Commercial Uses—The Effect Is Revolutionary—Is Challenging Steam in Many Places.

(From the London Standard)

The most phenomenal development in the history of engineering is that now taking place in the utilization of oil as a source of power and as a rival to coal as a means of raising steam. No other development has ever made such rapid strides, and none has been more revolutionary in effect. Ten years ago the oil engine was regarded either as a curiosity or as something to be used only in remote parts. Today oil has not only surpassed steam as a popular source of energy for general road transport but is challenging steam in the workshop, electrical generating stations, and even on the sea. While steam still holds preference, owing perhaps to the existence of a large and particularly useful unit, each oil is offering its services as a common power. These services are already in great demand.

Yesterday at Walsend-on-Tyne, in the presence of leaders in all departments of commerce, Messrs. Swan Hunter & Wigham Richardson announced the arrival of the *Walsend*, an oil tank steamer whose capacity is no less than 4,000 tons. This vessel, the fifth of its kind to leave the stocks of Walsend this year, will be hurried forward to take the place of the earliest propeller launched with the coming of emerging vessels on the high seas. As great as the demand for oil tank boats can not be, indeed, fast enough to please the merchants. The present relatively high price is largely due to the difficulty in meeting the heavy demand. The extraordinary activity in the shipbuilding yards upon the Tyne and Clyde is largely due to the flood of orders for large tank steamers to relieve the present pressure. The French are philosophical, and always equal to an emergency. While stubbornly refusing to believe that coal has found a rival ("at any rate for the present," as some of them guardedly remark), they are fully alive to the change that is taking place. If the truth were known, there are many great workshops in this heart of the coal industry where research is being conducted for the perfection of oil power. The Tyne-side is going to be in the van of anything affecting the shipbuilding to

A representative who has been investigating the attitude of the shipbuilding industry towards the development of oil power, confirms the statements that English shipbuilders are alive to the situation. Mr. Geo. B. Richardson, a director of Messrs. Swan, Hunter & Wigham Richardson, the builders of the abovementioned *Walsend* and of the world-famed *Mauritania*, informed our representative that no fewer than 17 oil-carrying steamers have been under construction this year in their yards, and that three of these yet to be launched will have a capacity of 15,000 tons each. What was even more interesting was the fact that within the next few days their second big boat, driven entirely by oil engines, would be ready to start from the Tyne on her maiden voyage. This is the *Calgary*, of 2,500 tons, a bigger sister to the *Tidier*, the first oil-propelled cargo boat to cross the Atlantic. Mr. Richardson admitted that his firm was building an oil engine of 400-horse power on the Diesel or two-stroke principle, for experimental purposes but had not yet decided upon any particular boat on which to give it a trial.

Meanwhile, in spite of the war between individual oilfields, the great maritime nations are seriously considering what the oil development means to their navies and mercantile efficiency. London within three weeks will have the opportunity of inspecting the first British ship driven by oil engines to cruise up the Thames. This is the *Edinburgh*, a boat of 4,500 tons, which has been

designed during the winter in Holland. There are many who will be anxious to compare her with the *Edinburgh* *Argus*, which has been racing the West Indian blockade boats, and is said to be under constant operation. Her speed is now considered to be second to *Victorine*.

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